

MINUTES
OF
REPATRIATION CONFERENCE
held in
NEW YORK, N. Y.
August 31-September 1, 1942

Korea - pp. 5-8 (E. H. Miller)

PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS
156 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, N. Y.

entirely inept and inefficient. Nevertheless, it is not right that we judge those who are prominent and apt to be exposed to publicity. On the other hand, we should pay tribute to the way in which the Japanese Christians have stood by the missionaries in many, many instances, even though some were unquestionably afraid to do much. While we were in the internment camp we received gifts from our Japanese friends despite real danger to the senders; some were marked, "With our love and our prayers." As I was leaving the camp to attend the funeral of Mrs. Hail, one Christian Japanese engaged the guard in conversation while another pulled me back to say, "Don't worry. No matter what happens I will stand by your wife just as you would." A young Japanese woman prepared our food in the camp. Although it was most difficult to get any food, she managed to get sufficient for thirteen people and to get it in to us. Always when she came she had to give her name and wait a long time, yet she always managed to do what she wanted to help us. Also she got many important messages through to us which we would not have gotten otherwise. She was both pretty and witty and used a sort of "consecrated vamping" to gain her ends! The principal of our school in Osaka stood by the missionaries, doing all he could publicly and privately to protect women teachers in that school and to care for them. I must pay tribute too to the man in Tokyo who has been untiring in his efforts to help. He has been rebuked again and again by the authorities, yet he went to Yokohama to pay the hospital bills of the women missionaries there and assisted immeasurably during the illness of Mrs. Hail in getting money to the women with her.

Mrs. Hail, who was one of the three brought back to Yokohama on the Tatuta Maru after war broke, died in her home in Tokyo on February 14. It was the greatest loss of our Mission during the time of war and yet it was also a time of great inspiration. The two people who attended her said, "It was a great privilege to be able to take care of Mrs. Hail. It has been a great spiritual experience to us to be with Mrs. Hail during these weeks."

What of the future of our work in Japan? On the day I left that country I received a letter which I read on the train. I destroyed it because I did not dare to keep it but, as nearly as I can remember, a part of it read as follows: "Even now, in spite of war, we approve your Board's policy in maintaining a maximum force consistent with the situation. Now you must go to America in sadness and with loss of personal possessions. But you do not go defeated. By staying until now you have given us courage and strength, you have done something lasting for us."

It has surely been a time of great testing for all, a testing of our ability to be educated. I am confident that there will be in the future, after this period of war, a period when there will be some form of cooperation between the Christian church in America and the Christian Church in Japan. We need to have such cooperation spiritually now, so that when the day comes when we can cooperate openly we shall have some basis of contact with the Japanese Church.

2. CHOSEN

Rev. E. H. Miller, Ph.D.

What I report to you must be from memory as the Japanese deprived me of all my papers. Going back a little from the time war began, you know that some time before some of our missionaries were charged with disturbing the peace. Their sentence was suspended and they were sent to the United States. Friends were unable to see them off. The freezing of money of aliens was a great inconvenience. Tension increased until August at the time of the Day of Prayer. Twenty-six of our missionaries were arrested, fifteen of them for distributing pernicious literature (the

Gospel message). When war came, December 8, the situation was much worse. In Syenchun, the three were interned in one house. In Seoul, the policy of the government was to insulate the missionaries and keep the Koreans away from them. In Pyengyang, Dr. Bigger and Mr. Lutz were first taken to the city daily for examination. This lasted for a couple of weeks when they were allowed to go about on their compound. There were some Maryknoll priests interned with them. The group spent their spare time in cutting firewood, painting windows, and planting a garden. In Chungju, the ladies were able to remain in their homes but were cut off from contact with the outside. In Taiku, Mr. Adams was at first put in jail, then freed and interned in his house, as were the Fletchers. I went to Seoul to meet Mr. Koons and to seek information at the Consulate for the missionaries in the interior. As we left, Mr. Koons was held up by a plainclothes man and taken to police headquarters, kept there over the lunch hour and then taken to a concentration camp where through the major portion of the time twelve men and a girl were held in a room twenty feet square, a classroom of the Methodist School. I was held five days in jail and subjected to minute examination, my life history taken, activities recorded, and then, because of a foot injury, I was sent back to the concentration camp. Christmas in Seoul has always been an "Underwood" day. Food was sent to us at the camp from the Underwood home and we had, despite all, a very happy Christmas Day in the concentration camp. On the next day I was sent permanently to prison where I spent 150 days. Two ladies from the college who were living nearby made provision for feeding the men in the camp. Early in January everything was taken from us in prison - spectacles, pencils, pens, knives - as a precaution against our committing suicide. We were given the common prison fare, a subsistence diet for a native, but completely inadequate for a foreigner, and I lost forty pounds in two months. Because I was an older man, they finally allowed me to buy three meals a day aside from the native diet, with less rice and more vegetables, but when I came out I was still twenty pounds under weight.

In the second week of January, because my answers had been unsatisfactory, the authorities said they would now baptize me in "the spirit of Japan." I was ordered to take off all outer garments and was put into a wooden cell, trussed up like a chicken, and water poured onto my head from behind so forcibly that it went into my eyes, nose and mouth. Sputtering, coughing, fighting for breath, I came up each time, feeling I could not endure it longer. Finally I was beaten on the back. As a special privilege, because of my age, I was allowed after receiving the "water cure" to dry off by the stove. From my cell I repeatedly saw men who had been taken up for the cure come back soaking wet and returned to their cells to dry off as best they could, this in January when the weather was intensely cold. I was threatened with seven degrees of torture unless my answers became more satisfactory, and also more missionaries might be brought in. On March 2nd they gave me my second water cure. They were seeking to find a code by which they said I had been trying to send out messages to the Board and the State Department. I of course continued to deny remembering that which I had never known and they continued to endeavor to "sharpen" my memory. One method they tried was having me sit Japanese fashion on my knees and heels while they beat me with three feet of hose on my head, neck and shoulders for a couple of hours, meanwhile lecturing me on the importance of remembering that code and threatening to send me to an insane asylum. It took me about two weeks to get over the swellings and bruises of that treatment. The third degree of torture was given me after they knew I was going to be repatriated. Two others of our men were brought to the jail, Mr. Reiner and Mr. Koons. While I was being submitted to the third degree of torture, Mr. Reiner underwent the water cure six times in sixteen days and at the end of that time he was a physical wreck.

The third degree was milder than the other two, contrary to their threat. False accusations were brought with regard to messages I was supposed to have sent

out to the missionaries. I was asked repeatedly why we missionaries had remained in Korea during the war, why we had sent various information to the Board and State Department in war-time (which of course we had not). They probed into all the correspondence that I had had anything to do with for a year and a half past and read into it a secret code and secret messages. Wherever they found the word "reinforcement" used, they interpreted it to mean military reinforcement; wherever they found the words "missionary force" they interpreted them to mean "military force".

The Church we have left behind us: The Korean General Assembly took issue with us and said Shrine Worship was merely patriotic, against the protest of the missionaries there present. They cut off relationships with us. In November 1941 I attended my last presbytery meeting, and my pastoral oversight of work which I had in a sense founded was cut off and given to a much younger man, newly ordained and inexperienced though with some promise. I of course lost my vote in presbytery. But the church is faithful in its carrying on of evangelistic work. Though the government has commandeered the church bells and melted them up along with a great many other metal objects, the four thousand town and village churches have their services Sunday and Wednesday where the faithful gather, read the Bible, sing the old hymns and talk of what concerns the Kingdom. The situation is very different from that in Japan. In Korea the Japanese are not merely against Christianity, they are determined to undermine it because it is the greatest unifying force among the Koreans. While we were in the concentration camp the pastor who has been serving Westgate church for two decades was forced to resign as pastor because he and his session had been lacking in zeal in teaching the old women of the congregation to recite the "oaths of allegiance", though they cannot understand what they mean anyway. In these oaths the people promise to be good citizens. The Pyengyang church was closed because of their unwillingness to attend Shrine Worship. Finally the government decided to try another method, so after the meeting of General Assembly the church was reopened and is open today.

Union between the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches has been accomplished. Nevertheless, they do not have the same reaction to pressures put upon them. When recently prayermeetings were forbidden, the Methodist Churches gave in and ceased having them. The Presbyterian Churches asked whether this was a command or advice to cease. Upon being assured that it was advice, they continued to hold their prayermeetings.

Mission schools are practically all closed; four have been transferred to the presbytery. Chosen Christian College had already been transferred to nationals and is carrying on as best it can under different circumstances, especially financial.

The hospitals are continuing their work of healing as in the past. The Taiku Hospital with its staff of nurses and the large hospital for lepers just outside the city of Taiku spread the Gospel far and wide, though some of their direct contacts with the churches have been cut off. Severance Hospital, owned and operated by a Korean Holding Corporation, has had its name changed and is headed by Dr. M. S. Kim. "In His Name" Hospital in Syenchun, reopened and put on its feet by Dr. R. K. Smith, is still doing good work. Pyengyang Hospital is being carried on by a graduate of Severance.

Our Executive Committee met on June 1st on a train en route to Fusan and adjourned to meet again aboard the Gripsholm, at which time we adopted six "Certainties" on which we base our future work, evangelistic, educational and medical, in the new Korea which shall emerge after the war. These six Certainties (read by Dr. Koons) are as follows:

1. It is certain that the evangelistic need in the future will continue to be great, and that it should constitute the main objective of mission work.
2. It is certain that the large body of Christians will continue to maintain an organization, whether union or denominational, that will offer at least a point of approach and probably of warm cooperation.
3. Despite losses due to retirement, health and dispersion, it is certain that there will be a nucleus of the present mission force able and willing to return to Korea.
4. It is certain that the economic condition of the people will make financial assistance in Christian work necessary.
5. It is certain that the present "ersatz" educational system will make future assistance in leadership necessary.
6. It is certain that there will be a tremendous need for medical work and that missionary physicians will find a place to serve the Korean people.

3. THAILAND

Rev. Paul A. Eakin

I think perhaps we got off much easier than those in Korea. Here are a few figures as a background to what I want to say about Thailand. At the outbreak of hostilities there were 47 regular missionaries on the field, 19 on furlough. In addition to the 47 regular missionaries on the field there were 6 special term missionaries. Of this number 26 escaped; 7 returned to the United States immediately, 15 remained in India, 3 were in Burma, 1 we understand is in South China, 1 died in India. With those who escaped were 11 children. There were 26 in internment camp in Bangkok and 8 children.

We returned to Bangkok from mission meeting early in December. The radio was full of reports that scouting planes had discovered troops headed for Thailand. On the morning of the 8th of December the radio reported that the Japanese troops had attacked Thailand and the Thai troops had been given the order to cease firing. The first attack in the Bangkok area came at a pleasure resort. Orders at first said to fight the Japanese no matter at what cost. The Thai troops fought valiantly. Then came the order to cease firing. Monday morning I went to the American Embassy to get authoritative information. The Japanese ultimatum was to the effect that Japanese troops must be allowed to pass through Bangkok. Any Americans who wished, particularly women and children, were told to come with one suitcase, a bedding roll and food to the Embassy. This became a haven of refuge in Bangkok. When the Japanese came in, nothing much was done at first. People were allowed to go and come. Later on people could go in but couldn't come out again. Later still troops came and pulled down the American flag and put up the Japanese flag and the Embassy was then practically cut off from the outside world. I sent a wire to Petchaburi asking that all the missionaries there come at once to Bangkok. All the missionaries in the stations north of Bangkok escaped. On the 23rd of December, early in the morning, we were taken to an internment camp in the university grounds and were more or less comfortably located there. The Thai authorities did not call this an internment camp but a protective camp because Thailand had not declared war on the United States, and we were constantly assured that we were being protected. We were told that they were arresting us to protect us and prevent the Japanese from arresting us. We were allowed to have the necessities of life but all our possessions were sealed. Each family had a little cubicle about 16 x 20.

